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By Dr Peter Morden, Spurgeon's College, the leading authority on this topic, these lectures will be accompanied by a symposium of European Baptist scholars offering papers related to the lectures (1-5 November).

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Taught by Professor John H Y Briggs, an internationally renowned Baptist historian and editor of *A Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought*, the course explores the different ecclesiological streams which contribute to the development of Baptist ecclesiology in both the 'General' and 'Particular' traditions, and how those historic developments influence baptistic church life and mission today.

*Though some of the participants will be doing these weeks as part of their degree at IBTS, the courses are open to anyone who wants to attend.
However, places are limited.*

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Editorial

This edition of the *Journal* launches our eleventh year of publication and is a veritable feast of scholarship with a theme of the interdependence of people in community, across nations and with God. This is a concern for us at IBTS. We enshrine an emphasis upon a non-reductionist communal understanding of who we are and what we are about. We are people in community with each other and with God.

Albertas Latužis explores the life of Lithuanian Baptists who met in small communities during the Soviet period. The relationship of Baptists in Lithuania and Latvia with each other, and the continuance of church community life under atheistic communism is a fascinating story. Those outside of the former Soviet empire knew much about happenings in Moscow, but here are amazing accounts of how small groups of believers survived and worked in corners of this empire about which we previously knew little.

Ian Randall reminds us of the insistence of early Baptist believers – both General and Particular – that the interdependency of churches in associations was not a matter of practical convenience or something which could be dispensed with if inconvenient, but was (and is) a theological and ecclesial necessity. Some Baptists elsewhere in the world have made light of the more-than-local aspect of Christian community, but we Europeans will have none of that. It is shoddy theology, created by both an inadequate understanding of the scriptures and an insufficient robustness in its ecclesiology.

Jan Hábl, a former doctoral student of IBTS, opens a wider horizon to explore ideas of a philosophy of education appropriate for today. He reminds us that J. A. Komenský (Comenius), ‘the teacher of the nations’, had a robust approach which must take into account the transcendent reality. Komenský continues to be used by educational theorists, but often this vital aspect of his thought is ignored. Here, it is brought back to the forefront.

I commend this edition of the *Journal* to you as repaying careful study.

The Revd Dr Keith G Jones
Rector, IBTS

Lithuanian Baptists during Soviet Times (1945-1989)

Albertas Latužis¹

For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all people, especially of those who believe.²

During the two decades following WWI, Lithuanian Baptists had managed to create, with great efforts, a structure for associating, which then was shattered during the years of WWII.³ In the independent Lithuania of the interwar period, there had been about 1100 Baptists, 600 of which belonged to a multi-cultural Union of Lithuanian Baptists. Another portion belonged to the German Baptist Union, but all congregations remained in communication and were engaged in common activities.

The first loss came in 1939, when Nazi Germany took over the region of Klaipėda (also known as Memel) in the Western part of Lithuania, which was home to the four strongest Baptist congregations. Another loss followed after the Soviet occupation of Lithuania, when, in 1941, using their repatriation rights, 180 members of the Kaunas church left for Germany, as did citizens of German descent from other Baptist congregations. During the German occupation the Baptist Union of Lithuania was restored, but only formally. Another painful loss came in 1944, when, with the front from the East approaching, another portion of Baptists moved westwards. At the end of the war, only about 200 Baptists were left.

Incorporation of Lithuanian Baptists into the Structure of the Soviet Union Baptists

The leaders of the Soviet Union Baptists took an interest in the Baltic Baptists as early as 1941. On 25th March 1941, Aleksey Andreyev, representing the Soviet Union Baptist Centre, wrote a letter to the pastor of the Vilnius church, Lukyan Apanasionok, thanking him for the warm

¹ Translated into English from Lithuanian and edited by Lina Andronovienė.

² 1 Timothy 4:12. Here and below, quotations from the Bible are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

³ On the history of Lithuanian Baptists, see Albertas Latužis, *Po Jo sparnais: Baptistų istorija Lietuvoje, 1841-1990 (Under His Wings: History of Baptists in Lithuania, 1841-1990)* (Klaipėda: Eglė, 2009) (in Lithuanian); and a summary in English by Albertas Latužis, 'Lithuania, Baptist history in', in John H.Y. Briggs, gen.ed., *Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009), pp. 304-305.

welcome, which implied that he had already visited Vilnius and met Apanasionok.⁴ Another letter is dated 10th April 1941, signed by M. Orlov, A. Andreyev and V. Urshtein. They write: 'We are glad about the report of brother Andreyev about your agreement to join, for spiritual work, with the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists.'⁵ Interestingly, at that time, the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) did not formally exist, as it was only in 1942 that the Temporary Council was formed, which, with the permission of the government, organised a congress in Moscow in 1944 during which the Evangelical Christians and Baptists merged into one Union governed by the AUCECB.⁶ The aforementioned letter meant that as early as 1941 a decision had been made in Moscow to put an end to the independence of the Baptist Unions in the Baltics.

The onset of the war in 1941 halted these plans. Correspondence with Moscow was renewed only in early 1945. A letter dated 1st March 1945 outlined the following instructions:

. . .immediately to start working on the matters of registering congregations. For this the following to be taken care of:

1. To prepare members' lists of no less than 20 members.
2. To appoint the leader of the congregation.
3. To elect an executive board of three persons.
4. To elect the auditing commission consisting of three persons.
5. To find a facility for meetings. This may be a separate house or a room, but it cannot have any persons living in it.

When electing the executive body, ensure the agreement of the local authorities. The presbyter, or the leader of the congregation, may be elected into the executive body and can be its chairman. Having done all this, address the Commissioner of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults, and the congregation will be registered. If in your locality you cannot find 20 members of the congregation, you may join your group with a neighbouring one and, having collected 20 members, to register it as one congregation (. . .) Once more we are pleading not to delay in taking care of the issue of the registration.⁷

⁴ The original of the letter is in the archive of the Union of Pentecostal Churches of Lithuania. Copy available through the author.

⁵ Personal archive of Albertas Latužis. Copy available through the author.

⁶ Further on AUCECB see Alexander Popov, 'All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB),' in Briggs, *Dictionary*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ Circular letter of AUCECB, addressed to L. Apanasionok (1 March 1945). Personal archive of Albertas Latužis. Copy available through the author.

Nonetheless, due to their isolated existence, this urging had not reached all of the congregations and groups in Lithuania.

Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Baptists were incorporated into the AUCECB as one of its fifty-seven regions. This process was completed between 19th and 24th August 1945, when the Baptist leaders in these republics and West Belarus were summoned to Moscow. Apanasionok represented Lithuania and was proposed for the post of the senior presbyter in Lithuania, as he was already known to Baptist leaders in Moscow. On 26th August 1945 he was ordained for ministry in Moscow Baptist Church. It is quite apparent that this was not a common decision of all Lithuanian Baptists; it was not even clear who should be involved in the discussion of such matters. It may be that Apanasionok did not see a better solution himself and therefore agreed to take up the post. Nonetheless, he was not too happy about it. In a letter of 1946 to Jonas Inkenas, the leader of a small village congregation in Biržai region, Apanasionok wrote:

On 1-3 December I was visited by brother Levindanto, the plenipotentiary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists in Moscow. When talking to him, I told him that it would be better that these duties were taken over by you. (. . .) I am expressing such opinion, because (. . .) you are ethnic Lithuanian and are in a better economic condition, therefore such office would suit you better than I. I, on the other hand, could deputise you when a need arises. (. . .) The same I have told in Moscow in August of last year, when I was summoned there. (. . .) If you agree or point to another person, I would convincingly recommend you or the person who you would suggest.⁸

In the same letter Apanasionok shared his intuition that Vilnius Baptist Church would be forced to merge with the local Pentecostal congregation.⁹ 'It would be more convenient for the government to track us if we are in one location', Apanasionok wrote.

Administration of Congregations

It was rather complicated for Apanasionok to fulfil the duties of the senior presbyter. At that time, he was the only Baptist minister in Lithuania without a secular job and a means of subsistence, as the small Vilnius congregation could ensure only minimal financial support. There were no

⁸ L. Apanasionok, personal letter to J. Inkenas (15 December 1946). Personal archive of Albertas Latužis. Copy available through the author.

⁹ This was true not only of the Baptists and Pentecostals in Vilnius, but in all of the Soviet Union: from 1945, Pentecostals were permitted existence only under the auspices of AUCECB. For an English summary of the merger and the tensions of the union, see Walter Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II* (Kitchener/Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1981), pp. 92-95.

resources for visiting other congregations and groups. Post-war Baptists in Lithuania were of several nationalities – Lithuanian, Latvian and Russian. Apanasionok, being Byelorussian, spoke Russian, Byelorussian, Polish and German, but knew neither Latvian nor Lithuanian, while only few Latvians and Lithuanians could speak Russian. Moreover, Apanasionok often complained of health problems. It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1947 his post went to Inkenas, who possessed a solid theological education and could easily communicate with all the believers, knowing the languages needed for this ministry.¹⁰ Yet for Inkenas, who was pastoring a small village church and running a farm as his own means of livelihood, ministering to all Lithuanian Baptists was not easy either, especially as he lived on the edge of Lithuania. With telephone communication not yet available, the main tool was letters. From this period, there is no data about any Lithuanian Baptist meeting, even an illegal one, for discussing matters of ministry.

Having announced the plan for the juridical registration of the congregations, the Soviet government had planned to finalise the process by the end of 1948.¹¹ For this purpose, and also in order to control further activities of religious communities, by the decision of the USSR Council of People's Commissaries, a special institution of the Commissioner of the Council of the Affairs of Religious Cults was established by late 1944 in Vilnius. This institution had a double subordination to the Supreme Councils of both USSR and the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Some Baptists felt the requirement of registration to be a thoroughly negative development and an infringement of believer's rights. Others, however, could see that the registration of religious communities is a practice in any civil society, where religious congregations benefit from holding a legal status of a juridical person. Certainly, what should be viewed negatively is the subversive activities of the secret service in the congregations, as well as the insistence on unconditional submission to the laws directed against the church. There have been suggestions that the registration was needed only so that the government could track and control the congregation's life and actions. However, one should have no illusions

¹⁰ For further material on Inkenas, see Lina Andronovienė, 'Jonas Inkenas and Forgiveness Lived Out: An Experiment in Biography as Narrative Theology', *American Baptist Quarterly* XXII, no. 2 (2003), pp. 247-261.

¹¹ *История ЕХБ в СССР* [History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the USSR] (Moscow: Издание ВЦЕХБ, 1989), p. 240. On negotiations regarding registration and the extensions applied, see Albertas Juška, *Mažosios Lietuvos bažnyčia XIV-XX amžiuje* [The Church of Lithuania Minor in the 14th-20th Centuries] (Klaipėda: Mažosios Lietuvos Fondas/Klaipėdos Universiteto leidykla, 1997), p. 230.

that the non-registered congregations were not spied upon and that there were no secret service agents infiltrated there.¹²

The AUCECB had appointed Nikolaj Levindanto as its plenipotentiary in the Baltic republics for an unlimited time. His service was viewed ambiguously. Levindanto resided in Riga, the capital of Latvia; it is perhaps for this reason that Latvian Baptist historians see his activities in a more negative light.¹³ In Lithuania he was a rare guest. So far no facts have been established which would give witness to his negative impact there. Documents have survived which demonstrate his concern and efforts in regard to the registration of the congregations in Vilnius and Kaunas, the largest cities in Lithuania.

Levindanto exerted significant influence in addressing the issue of the unification of Baptist and Pentecostal congregations in Vilnius. There is no doubt that he was following the directives of the AUCECB and did all that was in his power to ensure the completion of the unification process by 1948. It is not easy to assess this particular issue, but the complicated circumstances of those times need to be kept in mind.

By the end of 1948, a number of communities of smaller denominations were still not registered. However, this was not necessarily an expression of resistance against the Soviet powers, amounting to seeing the political in something which was not there; rather, it was the passivity of the congregations themselves and the lack of a functioning common structure. Another factor to take into account was the post-war chaos, difficulties in communication, and a great shortage of leaders.

So, only five Baptist congregations were registered in Lithuania. Three of them, which were Latvian-speaking, were in a stonger position as they kept contacts with Latvia's Baptists who were better organised, and through them maintained direct contact with the plenipotentiary of AUCECB, Nikolaj Levindanto, who was based in Riga. The other two registered congregations were in the Biržai region, where Inkenas was the minister. The registration of these churches, no doubt, was through his efforts. Meanwhile another five functioning but weak congregations did not manage to register. Later efforts of these churches to register indicate that they did not oppose registration; however, unfortunately, the best time to do so had already passed. Probably because of the weak administration of

¹² On the process of registration in Estonia, see Toivo Pilli, *Dance or Die: The Shaping of Estonian Baptist Identity under Communism* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), pp. 38-40.

¹³ Janis Tervits, *Latvijas baptistu vesture* [History of Latvia's Baptists] (Riga: LBDS, 1999); Modris Ginters, ed., *Vai tie bijām mes* [Could This Have Been Us] (Riga, 2005). On an Estonian view, cf. Pilli, *Dance or Die*, pp. 32-33.

these congregations four church buildings were lost, being proclaimed abandoned, and used for other purposes.

During the years following the war, the tiny Lithuanian Baptist family lost three active brothers due to deportations to Siberia. Inkenas, pastor of Dreiviškiai congregation and the senior presbyter of Lithuanian Baptists, was deported to Siberia in 1951 along with his family.¹⁴ In 1952 the leader of a small non-registered congregation in Žemaitkiemis, Jonas Cebitys, was also deported to Siberia. In 1948, Andrej Skobiej, the former pastor of Vilnius Pentecostal congregation, who, after the merger with the Baptists became the chairman of the joint congregation, was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. After the deportation of Inkenas, Pauls Zilberts took over the responsibilities of senior presbyter. However, in 1959 this post was abolished, with Levindanto taking over as the senior presbyter for all three Baltic republics. When Levindanto died in 1966, Estonian and Latvian Baptists already had their own elected senior presbyters.¹⁵ This, however, did not happen in Lithuania; until 1981 there was no joint council of the congregations and no senior presbyter.

Life of Registered Congregations and Non-registered Groups

Soviet authorities in Moscow would occasionally give orders to ‘apply pressure’ on the churches. This would come either as new restrictions or demands to strictly adhere to the existing Soviet laws. The AUCECB leadership would also be recruited for this task. Thus, for instance, in the plenary meeting of the AUCECB in December 1959 in Moscow, the chairman of the Council, Yakov Zhidkov, addressed the delegates by introducing the subject of the discussion – the growth of local congregations – and an issue ‘which will cause havoc among us’, as it was causing dismay ‘to those who belong to a different ideology’.¹⁶ Discussions lasted two days, with the Council adopting two documents enforcing severe restrictions in church ministry: ‘Letter of Instruction to Senior Presbyters of AUCECB’ and ‘Statutes of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of USSR’.¹⁷

¹⁴ In 1958, the Inkenas family returned to Lithuania, but after a few months, in 1959, was ordered by the authorities to leave the republic and moved to Latvia. On the story of Inkenas and its theological interpretation, see Andronovienė, ‘Jonas Inkenas and Forgiveness Lived Out’. On the connections of the story of Inkenas with the larger Baptist world, see Keith G. Jones, ‘Baptists and Anabaptists Revisited’, in Anthony R. Cross and Nicholas J. Wood, eds., *Exploring Baptist Origins*, Centre for Baptist History and Heritage Studies, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent’s Park College, 2010), pp. 138-156.

¹⁵ See Pilli, *Dance or Die*, p. 66; cf. Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals*, pp. 264-265.

¹⁶ *История ЕХБ*, p. 240. For an extended discussion, see С.Н. Савинский, *История евангельских христиан баптистов Украины, России, Белоруссии* [History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Ukraine, Russia, Belarus] (St Petersburg: Библия для всех, 2001), Vol. 2, pp. 201-208.

¹⁷ Савинский, *История евангельских христиан баптистов*, Vol. 2, p. 322.

These documents indeed caused a wave of indignation amongst the churches, and in 1962 brought a split within the Soviet Baptists.¹⁸ However, the ties of the Baptists in Lithuania with the centre in Moscow were so weak that they were hardly aware of what was going on, and the wave of the split largely bypassed them.

As to local authorities, they were not always that diligent in following orders in regard to religious organisations, or in some other instances were preoccupied by the matters of the Catholic majority. A religious minority such as Baptists was not the centre of attention. In contrast to some other regions of the USSR, where atheistic authorities would produce lists prohibiting certain hymns, demand advance lists of baptismal candidates, or insist on the longest possible testing period of these candidates, Lithuania's Baptists were often not even aware of such demands, and certainly were not going to comply with them. For instance, the congregation in Klaipėda, upon receiving the annual form of the activity report from the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs, would only record the number of those baptised, but would not produce the required data about these persons. These forms were accepted without comment.¹⁹

Northwestern Region

Registered congregations could lead a relatively calm life. This was enjoyed by all three Latvian-speaking congregations. Congregations in Ylakiai and Mažeikiai owned their own buildings. The congregation in Skuodas, which had lost its house of prayer²⁰ during the war, was gathering in the Lutheran church. However, the Skuodas and Mažeikiai congregations were rapidly diminishing due to the members' migration to Latvia,²¹ and in the 1960s both had less than the required minimum number of twenty members, thus losing their registration and subsequently joining the church in Ylakiai village.

¹⁸ For further information in English on the split within the AUCECB, see Constantine Prokhorov, 'The State and the Baptist Churches in the USSR (1960-1980)', in Keith G. Jones and Ian M. Randall, eds., *Counter-Cultural Communities: Baptist Life in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought, Vol. 32 (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), pp. 8-15; cf. Michael Boudeaux, *Religious Ferment in Russia: Protestant Opposition to Soviet Religious Policy* (London/New York: Macmillan & St Martin's Press, 1968), pp. 20-21, 26.

¹⁹ Personal recollections of the author. Unless specified otherwise, much of the data below comes from my personal involvement in the life of Lithuanian Baptist congregations, as well as oral interviews of the witnesses of the particular events and facts discussed in this article.

²⁰ A 'house of prayer' refers to the building where people met. In English we would normally use the word 'chapel'.

²¹ Many members were of Latvian origin, and all three churches were in an area close to the Latvian border.

The latter congregation was carrying on an active ministry. Its well-maintained house of prayer has never been closed. The core group of the congregation was well oriented in the circumstances and employed them to the best interests of the church. Quite frequently its special services would involve the ministry of the Word, songs and music by guests from Latvia. There were also visits from the Klaipėda and Žemaitkiemis churches. Baptismal services took place regularly, for the Ylakiai baptistery served for baptisms of believers from other Baptist churches. Members of the congregation would boldly invite the people of the village to their services, and they would happily come. The congregation also had a sizeable choir and a string band, and would visit and minister in other congregations in Lithuania and Latvia. As almost all the members were Latvian-speaking, contacts with Latvian-speaking Lutherans living in the vicinity were also maintained.

There is no data indicating that such active congregational life caused the displeasure of the authorities, although in no way did it agree with the demands of the atheistic powers.

Northeastern Region

With the deportation of Inkenas to Siberia in 1951, the existence of the small congregation in Dreiviškiai came to an end. As services used to take place in the home of Inkenas, the church lost both its leader and a place to gather. In 1953 this already dispersed congregation lost its registration, and the remaining members joined the Evangelical Christians-Baptists congregation in the nearby town of Biržai. The latter congregation was formed from those Methodists and Baptists who survived the war joining the majority of Pentecostals.

However, the life of the believers in Biržai was difficult. The house of prayer had burned down during the war, and the local authorities only permitted the congregation to be registered in a village five kilometres away from the town. Transport connections were poor and the facilities for gathering together were small. The authorities applied strong pressure not only on Baptists but also on a rather sizeable Reformed congregation.²²

Efforts of the Baptists to transfer the place of services closer to the town were met with opposition from the authorities. Finally, in the 1960s they were allowed to gather in the facilities belonging to the Reformed church. However, holding services in a very spacious church building which was not heated was a challenge for a small congregation, especially during the winter. In 1974 they were allowed to transfer their services into

²² In contrast to most of Catholic-dominated Lithuania, the Biržai region had a substantial population of the Evangelical Reformed who had survived the counter-reformation.

a private, conveniently located house, where a room was designated for this purpose. However, by that time the congregation was considerably weaker. The choir had ceased to exist, as did work with children. Younger people were leaving the province for urban centres. Up until the collapse of the Soviet regime, the leadership of the church tended to be very careful to avoid irritating the local atheistic authorities.

Western Region

The Klaipėda congregation, which until WWII was predominantly German, was entirely dispersed during the war. Almost all of its members moved to the West. Very few returned. Meanwhile, the deserted city was receiving Russian-speaking citizens from various regions of the USSR, which also included some Baptists. When the remaining and newly arrived Baptists started forming themselves into a small group, the house of prayer, located in the very centre of the town, had already been taken over by the authorities. The only possibility left was to gather in members' apartments.

The group also struggled with the absence of a permanent leader. It is not clear when the authorities were first approached about registration, but the surviving documentation relating to such a request is from 1956. This was already a disadvantageous period, and the request was turned down. Recollections of the believers and the documents suggest that the congregation was not practising conspiracy and, as it was seeking registration, was reporting to the Commissioner of the Council of the Affairs of Religious Cults any changes regarding the venue of services. However, the group did not consult the authorities on any other questions. In a letter of 1956, a former member of the congregation who emigrated to the Federal Republic of Germany, wondered whether, in his homeland, the believers could visit one another and 'that they are not precluded from engaging in spiritual work'.²³ Certainly, there were hindrances, but not to the extent of stopping the work altogether.

The status of this congregation, which for many years could not achieve registration, was based on an 'oral agreement' with the local authorities.²⁴ The representatives of the authorities would react to the requests for registration with a question, 'What is it that you want? What is hindering you to gather for praying? So if nobody is precluding you, just pray!'²⁵ Quite possibly, it was more profitable for the local and republic authorities to permit the existence of a non-registered congregation rather

²³ Adomas Želvys, personal letter to Jonas Inkenas (28 October 1956). Personal archive of Rūta Inkenaitė. Available through the author.

²⁴ Personal recollections of the author.

²⁵ Ibid.

than to spoil the report on the atheistic work by adding a newly registered religious group to the statistics. Finally, in 1977, the Council for Religious Affairs in Moscow took a decision to grant legal status to the Klaipėda Baptist congregation.²⁶

Even though the conditions were poor, in 1954 a small choir and a music band were established. Later a small brass band was organised. In about 1960 a permanent place was established for gatherings in the outskirts of the city, in a small house inhabited by three families. A room of ten square metres (initially inhabited) was allocated for church services. Later the facilities were expanded. The congregation remained in the building for the next thirty years. From 1975 the members began organising evangelistic meetings. These would take place over three or four days twice a year, with a guest preacher invited from Latvia or Estonia.²⁷ Members of the congregation would contribute with songs, poetry recitals and testimonies. As there was no possibility to advertise publicly, invitations would be spread by word of mouth. The congregation kept growing, slowly but steadily.²⁸

Growing in strength and in numbers, the congregation started to organise two-to-three-day excursions within Lithuania, and to Latvia and, on one occasion, Estonia. The purpose of these trips was to have fellowship, to meet new people and to visit the Sunday service of another congregation. Non-members would also join in these trips. The organisation required considerable skill, as such excursions were not officially permitted; the congregation did not have the right even to rent a bus. In the 1970s the young people of the congregation began organising summer trips into the countryside with a sleep-over in tents. Again, such events were used as occasions for physical as well as spiritual recreation. Later, in the 1980s, these camps grew and were attended by both young and older believers, not only from the Klaipėda congregation, but others as well. Non-members would always be invited too. Information about these activities was not issued in advance, and although the security service learnt about them post-factum, no disruptive measures were taken. The KGB would often ask the leadership of the church to inform them of such

²⁶ A scanned *Certificate Regarding the Registration of a Religious Community No. 77* issued in regard to the Evangelical Baptist religious congregation in Klaipėda by the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs for Lithuanian Republic, (20 March 1978), can be found, alongside other documents and photographs, in Latužis, *Po Jo Sparnais*, p. 231. Although the Certificate is from 1978, it was issued on the basis of the decision of the Council for Religious Affairs under the Ministers' Council of USSR dated 11 August 1977.

²⁷ Among the guests were M. Avotīnš, E. Strelis, E. Baumanis, P. Šēršnovs, J. Eisans, Arturs Škuburs, V. Kovalenko (Latvia); Aare Tamm, Johannes Togi, Arpad Arder (Estonia). Some of these were invited several times.

²⁸ Whereas in 1975 it had about 25 members, in 1990 the membership was over 70. These and other statistical details are available through the author.

events in advance, but this was never done. In the same manner, without much advertisement but also without much conspiracy, children's work was carried out.

Although there were many good moments in the life of the congregation, there were also considerable difficulties, mostly due to the lack of insight on the part of the leadership. For instance, in 1957, the congregation received into its membership a group of Russian-speaking 'Christians of the spirit of the apostles'.²⁹ A witness of those events had written in a letter: 'Now we work and worship our Lord together and with one heart'.³⁰ Unfortunately, it later appeared that there was no work and worship with one heart because of the radically different theologies of the two groups. Denying the Trinity and not recognising the baptism of the Baptists, the 'Apostles' enjoyed some partial legality under the Baptist 'roof', but strove to convince some members of the congregation to be baptised in the name of Jesus. This troublesome situation continued for fourteen years, until the 'Apostles' were finally asked to leave.³¹

Another feature of Klaipėda Baptists was their ecumenical ties with the Lutheran church and its members. Lutherans were another minority in the Catholic environment, but fellowship was possible only with those of pietistic inclinations, while the orthodox Lutheran clergy were not happy about these Baptist links. Nevertheless, Lutherans often attended Baptist services, and the Baptist choir and preachers served in Lutheran celebrations. Occasional festivities would be organised in the homes of Lutherans and Baptists dispersed in the vicinity of Klaipėda.³² Such numerous gatherings usually passed without difficulty, although there were occasions when they would be interrupted by the KGB. Intimidations would follow; lists of surnames of attendees would be made; books which were not hidden would be confiscated. Some people from the list would later be called for interrogation, but no further measures were ever taken.

²⁹ Also known as 'Oneness', 'Jesus-Only' or 'Apostolic' Pentecostals, the group originated at the beginning of the 20th century amidst the newly developing Pentecostal movement in the USA. Even before WWI Andrew Urshan and Nikolay Smorodin spread the movement's teaching in Russia. There, as in the rest of the former Soviet Union, they are called 'Smorodintsy' or 'yedinstvinniki', i.e., 'unitarians', as they reject the doctrine of the Trinity and practise baptism in the name of Jesus. In 1947 the group officially joined AUCECB, having signed a promise to uphold Baptist doctrine and practice; an agreement which was not kept. The group subsequently left AUCECB. On their incorporation into AUCECB in 1947 see Савинский, *История*, p. 185; and Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals*, p. 95.

³⁰ Valteris Bumbulis, personal letter to J. Inkenas (2 February 1958). Personal archive of Rūta Inkenaitė. Copy available through the author.

³¹ The negligence of the leadership is illustrated by the fact that in a similar situation in the Vilnius congregation, the leaders of the latter took a wiser decision by first clarifying the group's theology and subsequently refusing to accept it into its midst.

³² One example of these occasions was the so-called 'cemetery festival' – a specific summer-time worship service with songs, preaching and prayers held in a cemetery, jointly organised and attended by pietist Lutherans and Baptists.

The active life of this congregation was noticed by the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs. The report to Moscow for the year 1981 states, 'Religious congregation of evangelical Christians Baptists in Klaipėda also should be noted'.³³

After WWII, another congregation continued to exist for fourteen years in Western Lithuania, in the village of Žemaitkiemis. It had forty members and was formed from the remnants of three congregations which existed in the region before the majority moved to the West in 1944. This group enjoyed an active spiritual life. However, it is difficult to explain why care was not taken to register it, even more so, given that the congregation had a small prayer house in the same village. The services there were not renewed, with the believers meeting in homes. Steps were only taken to receive back the building in 1949, which was too late. One of the reasons for such passivity might be a weak relationship with Baptist leaders in Lithuania and information not reaching the congregation in good time. Although not registered, the group was active and did not experience great interference from the authorities. The church was led by Jonas Cebitys, who, although of old age, was deported to Siberia in 1952. His ministry was continued by Vilius Klumbys, who carried on this responsibility until the congregation ceased to exist in 1959, with almost all the members moving to West Germany.³⁴ One more lamp of spiritual light in Lithuania went out.

The Capital

For the Vilnius congregation, Soviet times presented a difficult journey. The situation was a complicated one for several reasons. Towards the end of WWII, a good number of the congregation had emigrated. Hesitation of the leadership to take decisions is evident. The procedure for registration, which started late, was halted for a long period due to issues relating to the juridical ownership of the building. The Baptist leadership in Moscow, directly and through its representative Levindanto, put in a lot of effort, but the congregation was not registered until 1967. The 1948 merger with the Pentecostals did not help either. Finally, in 1950, the building had to be forsaken.

However, the merged Baptist-Pentecostal congregation survived, with 55 members in 1955. First of all, services were held in apartments and, during the summer months, in the forest. In 1957 the authorities gave their

³³ Central State Archive of the Republic of Lithuania, R-181, Ap 3 B 107.

³⁴ According to the 1958 agreement between the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany, citizens of the Soviet Union who in 1941 possessed German citizenship (regardless of ethnicity) were given the right to request permission to repatriate to West Germany. Arthur Hermann, *Lietuvių ir vokiečių kaimynystė* [Lithuanians and Germans as Neighbours] (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2000), p. 90.

oral promise to allow this unregistered congregation to hold services in rented facilities in a private apartment. Even though conditions for ministry were difficult, 1957 saw the beginnings of a small choir. At that time the leadership of the congregation was rather resolute and constantly insisted on registration. Finally, in 1967, the congregation was registered under the name of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, although the majority were Pentecostals. In the same year, permission was given for the congregation to purchase a building which, after several capital renovation projects, was converted into a spacious house of prayer and is still in use today.

As the church grew, youth work commenced. In 1969 a youth choir was organised, and in 1971 the first steps were taken to form a Sunday School for children. In 1972 a brass band was founded. In the same year a music band came to life, as well as a men's choir. By that time the church had 320 members. It must be noted that the membership grew not only because of new converts, but also due to young people arriving in Vilnius from neighbouring Belarus, where believers had virtually no possibility of education, whereas Vilnius at that time offered favourable conditions. The 1975 report of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs on Baptists states that 'The Vilnius E. Ch. Baptist congregation is steadily growing and it is the most active and restless. There is a pastor and 14 preachers.' The report continues with quotes from the sermons delivered in the church.³⁵

Many guests frequented the services, especially after the acquisition and renovation of the house of prayer. They would come from Baptist and Pentecostal congregations in Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Ukraine. This united congregation of two denominations lived comparatively peacefully together for four decades. Striving for accord, certain doctrinal and practical compromises were required on both sides. As the number of Pentecostals grew, especially due to those joining from congregations in the East, the church became increasingly Pentecostal, even though a cluster of radically minded Pentecostals did not find it sufficient and separated to form their own group. In 1988 the congregation decided to change its name to reflect its Pentecostal doctrines. The change was legally completed in 1994, after the congregation had already joined the Union of Pentecostal Churches of Lithuania.

Central Lithuania

Kaunas had three ethnic Baptist congregations until WWII: German, Lithuanian and Russian, with 220 members in total. After the war, only about twenty members were left. Without active leadership, an opportunity

³⁵ Central State Archive of the Republic of Lithuania, R-181, Ap 3 B 92.

was lost to renew ministry in an excellent church building which was then taken over by the authorities and used for salt (!) storage. From the surviving documents it is evident that registration issues were also taken slowly. Surviving letters indicate that Levindanto was concerned about the situation of this congregation, but regretted that his letters were often not even answered, nor were his offers to go to Kaunas to discuss the situation accepted.³⁶ Senior presbyters did not seem to provide much assistance either.

The congregation itself survived, even without much active life. This small group regularly gathered in apartments, with the knowledge of the authorities. From time to time they would be visited by preachers from Vilnius or Klaipėda. With no growth in membership, the group occasionally suffered from wandering ‘prophets’ who would create havoc. The situation improved when, in 1982, a young brother, Vlasdas Sereda, was elected for pastoral ministry, which he continues to this day. As it could be expected, the Soviet security structures took an interest in Sereda, but, in his own testimony, they were not able to turn him into an agent.³⁷ Sereda completed a Bible Correspondence Course in Moscow in 1987. With a more stable situation, the congregation experienced growth and was finally registered in 1988.³⁸

Northern Region

Yet another congregation had at least a theoretical possibility to survive. It existed in Šiauliai and was made up of some members from before the war, along with a few Methodists and Lutherans. However, there was nobody willing to take up the leadership and to organise congregational life. One family built a house from the bricks of the buildings destroyed during the war and allocated a room for meetings. However, the attendees were put off by disorder in organisation and weak preaching, and the numbers reduced. In 1956 the congregation appealed to the authorities for registration, admitting that ‘we were late to register in 1948’.³⁹ The authorities began searching for faults with the aforementioned building’s legality and ownership, and the family who had owned it moved away. The request for

³⁶ For instance, in a letter dated 22 April 1947 Levindanto writes: ‘I have not received a response [from Kaunas], even though my letter has not been returned [undeliverable]. One assumes that somebody has received that letter, but does not want to respond, or perhaps there is no one to do that.’ Personal archive of Albertas Latužis. Available through the author.

³⁷ Vlasdas Sereda, Personal testimony, November 2008. Available through the author.

³⁸ After the change of the political regime, the old prayer house, in a very deteriorated condition, was also returned by the authorities.

³⁹ Application for registration, submitted by the Baptist community in Šiauliai to the Commissioner of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults B. Pušinis, 1956. Central State Archive of the Republic of Lithuania, R-181 Ap.2 B. 101.

registration was not complied with, and after a while the congregation disappeared.

Much later, in the 1970s, in the Radviliškis region, not far from Šiauliai, a new congregation was born. It was formed from ethnic Germans who came from Central Asia and settled in Lithuania, as the Baltic area was known to provide a better chance to be granted permission to emigrate to West Germany. These were radical dissenting Christians, and perhaps, for this reason, for a while they carefully observed and examined Lithuania's Baptists. Only in 1981 did they initiate their first visit, which was to the Klaipėda congregation. Later these connections grew stronger. Naturally, this congregation was not registered and was not even considering such a possibility, as their goal was to move to Germany, sooner or later. Surviving documents, as well as personal recollections, point to the special attention they received from the atheistic authorities; the group's activities were constantly under surveillance. The report of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs for the year 1981 contains the following:

In the Radviliškis region, there continues to exist a religious group of Baptist schismatics, comprising of citizens of German ethnicity. This is a congregation with an active life. Regular services are held. There has been a case of an illegal show of a film slandering the religious situation in the USSR. Services are visited by Baptist schismatics from other places in the republic. The preachers attempt to also recruit Lithuanians into their sect.⁴⁰

It has to be added that the sincere efforts of these people were not in vain, resulting in a group of Lithuanians who one-by-one became believers. When a young Lithuanian Komsomol⁴¹ activist was converted in one small town, a serious problem ensued, with some young people being threatened and pressurised by officials. When the institution of the Commissioner discovered the links between this group and the Klaipėda congregation, the pastor of the latter was reproached for several years for fellowshipping with 'schismatics'. The response was always the same: 'For you they may be "schismatic", but for us these are brothers in faith. If you hold them to be the enemies of the state, then you certainly do not have eyes to see the real enemies.'⁴²

The Germans were gradually granted permission to emigrate, but they left behind a small group of newly converted Lithuanians and

⁴⁰ Central State Archive of the Republic of Lithuania, R-181, Ap.3, B. 107.

⁴¹ Komsomol: Communist Soviet Youth, the youth organisation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

⁴² Personal recollections of the author who was the pastor of Klaipėda Baptist congregation at that time.

Russians. Finally the authorities suggested, and in 1989 accepted, their legalisation as a branch of the Klaipėda congregation.

Relations with AUCECB after 1959

As mentioned above, 1959 saw the abolishment of the office of senior presbyter in the Baltic republics, with Levindanto becoming the sole coordinator of Baptist affairs for the whole area. From the death of Levindanto in 1966 until 1981, Lithuanian Baptists had no joint council of the congregations and no senior presbyter. Links between congregations were maintained through occasional and personal initiatives. Relations with the Moscow centre were virtually non-existent, except for some personal links. Even though the AUCECB was running Correspondence Bible Institute courses, there was no discussion on making use of them. However, in 1976, Albertas Latužis, pastor of the Klaipėda congregation, was invited to enrol. Going to a legally functioning school from a non-registered congregation was nothing less than a miracle.

It was increasingly evident that without a clear Baptist structure in Lithuania and with no official links with the centre in Moscow many opportunities were lost. Discussions took place between the various leaders of the congregations, when the idea emerged to join the Latvian Baptist brotherhood by electing a representative who would become part of their Council and would be one of the deputies of Latvia's senior presbyter (called bishop in Latvia). After discussing this question, the leadership of Latvia's Baptists agreed to help Lithuanian Baptists. In March 1979, the author of this article presented the proposal to the General Secretary of the AUCECB, Alexey Bychkov, in Moscow. The plan was immediately approved, and in 1979 the authorities gave their permission for a conference to be organised in Vilnius of Lithuanian Baptist congregations and groups.

It was agreed to propose that Jonas Inkenas, who had, by that time, returned from exile to Lithuania, become the Lithuanian representative as deputy to the Latvian bishop. One day before the conference a meeting took place between Bychkov, the bishop of the Latvian Baptist congregations Janis Tervits, and Inkenas. All three of them visited the office of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs. During the course of the meeting, Tervits asked a question: 'Would it not be better if Lithuanian Baptists institud their own association?' To the great surprise of all, the deputy of the Commisioner responded, 'Well why not? I also do not understand why such a complicated plan is needed when this could be the

solution.⁴³ The next day, conference delegates were surprised by the new proposal: to institute a separate association of Lithuanian Baptist congregations in the framework of the AUCECB. This was agreed, with Inkenas being elected as the senior presbyter of the new grouping. Inkenas continued to serve in this role until his sudden death in 1983. He was succeeded by Ivan Panko, pastor of the Vilnius congregation, who played a fairly active role until the disintegration of the association in 1989 and the subsequent formation of the Pentecostal and Baptist Unions of Lithuania.⁴⁴ Latužis was elected as Panko's deputy. At the same time a Council was elected from among congregational representatives.

The results of the decision to form a separate association were undoubtedly positive. They included:

- A clearer idea of interdependency and commitments in ministry;
- A possibility to legally hold conferences and consultations;
- Opportunities to receive greater amounts of Christian literature from Moscow;
- Possibilities to take part in events organised by the AUCECB;
- A possibility to study in the Correspondence Bible Institute, where Lithuania was allotted one place per year. Five brothers completed the programme, two of them being sent from non-registered congregations.
- Opportunities to help small non-registered congregations.

The association regularly received informational notices from the AUCECB as well as the only legally published Soviet Baptist journal, *Bratsky Vestnik*. From 1981, the senior presbyter received a remuneration for his ministry from the central treasury in Moscow; the latter also covered other ministry-related expenses for the senior presbyter. For their part, Lithuanian congregations passed their annual contributions to Moscow.

In Conclusion

During WWII, Lithuanian Baptists lost many of its members. The congregational and union structure was also completely broken. By the end of the war some congregations were so weak that they did not even attempt to renew their activities; in some cases, they resumed much later. The issue of the legalisation of the congregations should not be seen as necessarily negative, as registration gave an opportunity for the churches to use facilities needed for congregational activities. It can hardly be claimed that

⁴³ Report of Bychkov, Tervits and Inkenas to Lithuanian Baptist conference delegates, 9 November 1979.

⁴⁴ It is worth noting that the disintegration of the association was prompted by the move of the Pentecostal congregations to form their own Union.

registered congregations were under heavier surveillance of the security authorities; experience would suggest that non-registered groups received more attention. Of course, the authorities were able to apply pressure on registered congregations, but this influence could be kept minimal if reacted to wisely, or, in the case of unjust and legally ungrounded demands, simply ignored. For instance, no case is known in Lithuania where the congregational leadership was elected by a prior agreement of the officials.

However, Soviet law proved highly restrictive in regard to church activities. Some activities were prohibited, such as evangelism, congregational education of children and youth, wider musical activities, or humanitarian help. Ecumenical relations were also very restricted.⁴⁵ In order to survive and to achieve something for the sake of the Kingdom of God, a lesson had to be learned that it is more profitable to act than to speak. Certainly political issues had to be avoided; the focus had to be on the truths of the faith.

Baptists in Lithuania strove to maintain naturally emerging relationships with other Christian minorities: Pentecostals, Lutherans, Reformed, and at times the Adventists. There were no official contacts with Catholics and Orthodox. Only in the 1990s did an opportunity and need arise for cooperation with the Catholics in the translation and publication of the Bible in Lithuanian. This was an important step, as until that time there was no complete Bible in contemporary Lithuanian.⁴⁶

During the Soviet regime, not only was the Bible unavailable, but also other Christian literature in Lithuanian. In order to attempt to address this, *samizdat* translations were made from English, German, Latvian and Russian: usually poetry, songs, articles, sermons and even entire books. The material was produced on a typewriter and passed from hand-to-hand. From 1980 onwards, opportunities emerged to have some Christian material published abroad in the Lithuanian language. It was a great source of joy when such material secretly reached Lithuania.

Looking back, another factor needs to be noted. Many believers of those times had a strong desire to share the message of the Gospel with others. As organised and open missionary activities were prohibited, other opportunities had to be found. Many engaged in personal evangelism, which could not in reality be prohibited. Other opportunities were used

⁴⁵ For a broader picture, cf. Ingmar Kur, 'Ecumenical Relations of the Free Churches', in Riho Altnurme, gen.ed., *History of Estonian Ecumenism* (Tartu/Tallinn: University of Tartu/Estonian Council of Churches, 2009), pp. 171-193.

⁴⁶ The Lithuanian Bible Society, which carried forward the translation and editing of the Bible into Lithuanian, was founded in 1992 and was one of the first Bible Societies to include the Roman Catholic Church among its founding members.

with great success: Christian weddings, funerals, birthdays and similar events. These events were viewed as an opportunity to witness to Christ and therefore much preparation was put into them.

In spite of all the restrictions and difficulties, membership gradually increased, as witnessed by the reports of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs. One of the reports notes that in 1975 registered congregations alone had 449 members, compared to 356 members in 1971. It was emphasised that within five years the membership had grown by almost 21%. The report for 1981 noted that registered Baptist congregations had 579 members, with 98 people taking part in choirs and 35 in orchestras. A note was made that 90% of this musical activity was carried forward by young people.⁴⁷ The report for 1972 speaks of the Vilnius congregation:

Knowing the situation in the congregation and the speeches of the preachers, we have repeatedly invited the pastor of the congregation Skobiej and its board to discuss the activity of the congregation. They attempt to deny our claims, but sometimes they hold our reproofs to be unfair. For example, during one meeting, Skobiej noted that 'there are sometimes unneeded words said by some preachers. We discuss this with them and tell them to speak rightly, but sometimes it happens that they speak of other things. We do not want to break Soviet laws.'⁴⁸

In the institution of the Council for Religious Affairs, the affairs of religious minorities, including Baptists, were handled, not by the Commissioner himself, but by his deputy. Based on the recollections of the situation after 1960 by those involved at the time, it can be said that the behaviour of the representative of the Council was rather respectful. Conversely, relationships between the Commissioner and the Catholic Church have always been strained.

The conduct of the local authorities and local KGB workers was a different matter. At times, constructive dialogue with representatives of local authorities was possible, but a change of staff could also bring brutality, threats and humiliation. Many believers from those times behaved honourably, without forgetting that 'our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.'⁴⁹

Albertas Latužis, a long-time pastor of Klaipėda Baptist Church, was the deputy Senior Presbyter of the Lithuanian Evangelical Christians-Baptists

⁴⁷ Central State Archive of the Republic of Lithuania, R-181, Ap 3 B 83.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ephesians 6:12.

during the last years of the Soviet regime and the Chairperson of the Lithuanian Baptist Union since Lithuania regained its independence until 2005. He is the author of the recently published history of the Baptists in Lithuania, *Po Jo sparnais: Baptistų istorija Lietuvoje, 1841-1990 (Under His Wings: History of Baptists in Lithuania, 1841-1990)* (Klaipėda: Eglė, 2009).

‘Counsel and Help’: European Baptists and Wider Baptist Fellowship

Ian M Randall

For European Baptists the desire to associate together has been part of the story of their life since the seventeenth century. It is true that when John Smyth and Thomas Helwys began what was the first English-speaking Baptist Church, in Amsterdam in 1609, they did not deal with the question of inter-church fellowship. As W.T. Whitley commented, ‘(t)he question never became important to Smyth how one church was related to another, so he never raised it, much less examined scripture to answer it. He neither affirmed nor denied independency’.¹ But it should be noted that Smyth’s background was in the Separatist community in England and that a commitment to local congregations associating together is to be found in seminal English Separatist documents such as *A True Confession*, produced in 1596 by a group of Separatists who had taken refuge in Amsterdam. Clause 38 of that confession states:

That though Congregations be thus distinct and several bodies, every one as a compact city in itself, yet are they all to walk by one and the same rule, & by all means convenient to have counsel and help one of another in all needful affairs of the church, as members of one body in the common Faith, under Christ their head.²

This wording was reproduced without any substantial change in the *London Confession* of 1644, compiled by the leaders of seven Particular Baptist congregations meeting in London. Some of the signatories – who included influential Baptist figures such as William Kiffin, Thomas Patience and John Spilsbury – had been connected with the older Separatist movement. The 1644 wording reads:

Article XLVII (47)

And although the particular Congregations be distinct and several bodies, every one a compact and knit city in itself; yet are they all to walk by one and the same Rule, and by all means convenient to have counsel and help

¹ *The Works of John Smyth, Vol. I*, with notes and biography by W.T. Whitley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), p. lxxi. For more on John Smyth see J.R. Coggins, *John Smyth’s Congregation: English Separatism, Mennonite influence and the Elect Nation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991) and J.K. Lee, *The Theology of John Smyth: Puritan, Separatist, Baptist, Mennonite* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003).

² ‘A True Confession’ of 1596, in W.L. Lumpkin, ed., *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1969), p. 94. Here and elsewhere I have modernised the English. For background see B.R. White, *The English Separatist Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

one another in all needful affairs of the Church, as members of one body in the common faith under Christ their only head.³

This statement about ‘counsel and help’ between congregations was not simply theoretical. The confession was, as B.R. White has pointed out, the basis for national efforts in Baptist church planting and Association building in the 1640s and 1650s.⁴ Paul Fiddes speaks of the way in which the 1644 confession ‘held the balance between the privileges of the local church on the one hand, and on the other the necessity to seek the guidance of God from others’.⁵ In his commentary on the same confession, Nigel Wright argues that ‘(w)hat is envisaged is a free association of churches held together by mutual trust and moral authority’.⁶

As the number of Baptist congregations in England multiplied in the mid-seventeenth century, it became clear that these churches saw associating as an important theological conviction that needed to be worked out in practice. This is well illustrated in the case of the Abingdon Association, a Particular Baptist grouping. At a meeting in October 1652, representatives of the churches in the Association stated that ‘the churches of Christ do all make up one body or church in general under Christ their head’.⁷ Two months later an Association statement was produced which offered a simple argument for associating. Those who compiled it believed that ‘the reasons which required a believer to be in membership with a particular congregation were precisely the same as those which required a distinct congregation to be in membership with a wider fellowship of churches’.⁸ These reasons were:

1. To exercise mutual care.
2. To keep the churches pure. Those churches that were ‘disorderly’ were to be ‘disowned’ by the other churches.
3. To enable love to extend beyond one’s own congregation.
4. So that the work of God could prosper through combined strength.
5. Because each church, like each believer, needs the help of others to quicken them when lukewarm, help when in want, assist with advice and prevent misunderstanding.

³ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, pp. 168-9

⁴ B.R. White, ‘The Practice of Association’, in D. Slater, ed., *A Perspective on Baptist Identity* (Mainstream: 1987), p. 23.

⁵ Paul S. Fiddes, *Tracks and Traces: Baptist Identity in Church and Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), p. 55.

⁶ Nigel G. Wright, *Free Church: Free State* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), p. 188.

⁷ B.R. White, ed., *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660, Part 3: The Abingdon Association* (London: Baptist Historical Society, [1974]), p. 126.

⁸ White, ‘The Practice of Association’, p. 23.

6. To convince the world that the churches were true churches of Christ.⁹

The outworking of this wider fellowship was through discussions between those who were chosen to be representatives of the churches at Association meetings. One of the typical Abingdon Association meetings consisted of eleven 'Messengers', as they were termed, from five churches.¹⁰ I will return to the role of Messengers.

The General Baptists engaged in similar joint discussion and action.¹¹ An Association meeting was held in 1651, probably at Leicester, with thirty General Baptist churches represented, each by two Messengers. This meeting issued an important document, *The Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations, Gathered According to the Primitive Pattern*. This is the first General Baptist statement conveying the convictions of more than one congregation. The introduction to the document stated that it was published 'by consent of two from each Congregation, appointed for that purpose', and that it was designed to inform, to correct misapprehensions, and to seek to ensure that congregations 'may in love, and the spirit of Meekness, be informed by any that conceive they walk amiss'.¹² Paragraph 65 of the Confession talked about the wider fellowship of churches responding to the needs of the poor in any individual congregation:

That if the poor fearing God, cannot conveniently have a competent maintenance, for the supply of their necessities in that society whereunto they must commonly resort, that then those men that have the care laid upon them, send or give intelligence to the other Churches or saints of God, who have engaged themselves by declaring their willingness towards the relief of such a distressed people, Rom 15.26.¹³

These General Baptist meetings in the Midlands also had a missional vision. It may well have been at a meeting at Stamford in 1656 that two Messengers were commissioned as General Baptist evangelists to the West Country of England.¹⁴

In the same period the (national) General Assembly of General Baptists began to meet. In 1660 a *Brief Confession* produced by the General Assembly spoke of the importance of 'the poor saints belonging to

⁹ White, ed., *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660, Part 3: The Abingdon Association*, p. 128; cf. White, 'The Practice of Association', p. 23.

¹⁰ White, ed., *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660, Part 3: The Abingdon Association*, p. 129.

¹¹ I am categorising English Baptists in this period as Particular or General, but it should be noted that Stephen Wright, in *The Early English Baptists, 1603-1649* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2006), has argued for a more complex categorisation.

¹² Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, p. 174.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹⁴ B.R. White, *The English Baptists of the 17th Century* (London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1983), p. 51.

the Church of Christ' being 'sufficiently provided for by the Churches'. The stress on social care is significant. Help was to be channelled through Deacons – called 'Overseers of the poor' – so that there would be 'no need in the Church of Christ'.¹⁵ The way in which General Baptists spoke about 'the Church', not only 'the churches', is an indication of their connexional ecclesial view: their General Councils were seen as having 'a lawful right...to act in the name of Christ'.¹⁶ This approach to church government was one espoused by Scottish and English Presbyterians and also by the Society of Friends, but it was not accepted by the Congregational churches or by the Particular Baptists. Some took a mediating position. Thomas Grantham, a General Baptist leader in the West of England, argued that 'we ought to consider with great respect what is concluded by a General Council of Christ's Ministers', but suggested that it was proper to 'doubt of what they deliver, unless they confirm it by the Word of the Lord'.¹⁷ There were, therefore, differences between the two streams of English Baptists about the precise authority of 'more than local' gatherings, but the common ground was an acceptance of their legitimacy.

Baptist life in England was severely restricted from the early 1660s, following the restoration of the monarchy, but there was some temporary easing in the later 1670s and both Particular and General Baptists took the opportunity to issue fresh confessions or statements of faith. Among Particular Baptists, the *Second London Confession* of 1677 (which was re-issued in 1688-89) was to have wide influence. It states that it was 'put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many Congregations', and it has an extended consideration of the relationship between Baptist congregations. Much of the wording was, however, not new, but was drawn from the Congregationalist Savoy Declaration of 1659, and it therefore represented a conscious attempt by Particular Baptists to identify themselves with a wider Dissenting ecclesiology. Chapter 26, on the church, stated:

14. As each Church and all the Members of it, are bound to pray continually, for the good and prosperity of all the Churches of Christ, in all places; and upon all occasions to further it (every one within the bounds of their places, and callings, in the exercise of their Gifts and Graces) so the churches (when planted by the providence of God so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage of it) ought to hold communion amongst themselves for their peace, increase of love and mutual edification.

¹⁵ W.T. Whitley, ed., *Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches*, Vol. 1 (London: Kingsgate Press [1910]), p. 17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xxx-xxxi.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

15. In cases of difficulties or differences, either in point of Doctrine, or administration; wherein either the Churches in general are concerned, or any one Church in their peace, union, and edification...it is according to the mind of Christ, that many Churches holding communion together, do by their messengers meet to consider, and give their advice in difference, to be reported to all the Churches concerned; howbeit these messengers assembled, are not entrusted with any Church-power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any Churches or Persons: or to impose their determination on the Churches, or Officers.¹⁸

Churches were urged to hold communion together – indeed this was seen as ‘according to the mind of Christ’ – but it was made clear in this statement that in Particular Baptist thinking wider gatherings were empowered only to issue advice, not to impose their will on local congregations.

In 1679 a number of English General Baptist leaders, of whom the most significant was Thomas Monk, produced the *Orthodox Creed*. Forty-four of the signatories of the Orthodox Creed came from Buckinghamshire and most of the others came from nearby. It was not, therefore, a national statement carrying the weight that the Second London Confession did for the Particular Baptist community. Nonetheless, it was widely circulated and was a teaching tool for the more orthodox General Baptists.¹⁹ The Creed gives a clear picture of the way in which General Baptists saw the issue of churches relating together. Article 39 is on ‘general Councils or Assemblies’:

General councils, or assemblies, consisting of Bishops, Elders and Brethren, of the several churches of Christ, and being legally convened, and met together out of all the churches, and the churches appearing there by their representatives, make but one church, and have lawful right, and suffrage, in this general meeting, or assembly, to act in the name of Christ; it being of divine authority, and is the best means under heaven to preserve unity, to prevent heresy, and superintendency among, or in any congregation whatsoever within its own limits, or jurisdiction. And to such a meeting, or assembly, appeals ought to be made, in case any injustice be done, or heresy, and schism countenanced, in any particular congregation of Christ, and the decisive voice in such general assemblies is the major part, and such general assemblies have lawful power to hear, and determine, as also to excommunicate.²⁰

Not only did this statement set out a very high view of the authority given to general councils, it also used the word ‘Bishops’. More commonly those

¹⁸ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, pp. 288-9.

¹⁹ White, *The English Baptists of the 17th Century*, p. 119.

²⁰ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, p. 327.

General Baptist ministers with specifically translocal ministries, such as Thomas Monk, were called Messengers. In both the Particular Baptist and General Baptist communities wider church relationships were expressed in personal ways as well as through associational ‘meetings’.

A number of British Baptists have explored the significance of Messengers in the context of formative Baptist thinking about wider ecclesial structures. Geoffrey Reynolds, in *First among Equals: A study of the basis of association & oversight among Baptist churches* (1993), refers to the thinking of Thomas Grantham in the 1670s. Grantham wrote about three kinds of ministers being given to the churches – ‘Messengers (or Apostles), Bishops (or Elders) and Deacons’. Here the term Bishop is equated with Elder, while the Messengers, according to Grantham, although not strictly successors to the Apostles nonetheless share many of their functions – as itinerant ministers with ‘authority to preach the Gospel in all places’ and ‘to plant churches and to settle those in order who are as sheep without a shepherd’.²¹ In a volume of essays published in 2004 by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Ruth Gouldbourne, now minister of Bloomsbury Baptist Church in London, suggests that among seventeenth-century Baptists the word Messenger was applied to evangelists, to those representing local churches at wider gatherings, to those having a care for and an advisory role over churches, and to those who were elected to have some – undefined for us – authority over the ministry in a group of churches. Gouldbourne suggests that the office of Messenger was a contested one and by the end of the eighteenth century it seems to have virtually disappeared.²²

The sense of being part of a wider community of Baptists did not, however, disappear. The Northamptonshire Baptist Association became a crucial catalyst for world mission in the later eighteenth century, with its ministers playing a major part in the formation in 1792 of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS).²³ William Carey was a minister in this Association, having been baptised in 1783 by John Ryland (minister in Northampton); and Andrew Fuller, the first Secretary of the BMS, was similarly active in the Association’s life.²⁴ Association ministers passed on

²¹ G.G. Reynolds, *First among Equals: A study of the basis of association & oversight among Baptist churches* (Bath: Berkshire, Southern and Oxfordshire and East Gloucestershire Associations, 1993), p. 60, citing T. Grantham, *Christianismus Primivitus*, Book 2, pp. 119, 121.

²² R. Gouldbourne, ‘Messengers: Do They Have a Message for Us?’, in S. Murray, ed., *Translocal Ministry* (Didcot: Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2004), pp. 24-7.

²³ For the history of the Association see T.S.H. Elwyn, *The Northamptonshire Baptist Association* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1964). For the history of the Baptist Missionary Society, see B. Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992).

²⁴ For Fuller see P.J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003).

missionary reading material,²⁵ with a particular interest being taken in the Moravians, a remarkable missionary group emanating from central Europe. In his famous *Enquiry*, Carey argued that no-one in recent times had equalled the Moravian Brethren in missionary endeavours.²⁶ The Northamptonshire Baptist Association tabulated Moravian achievements.²⁷ It is likely that Carey drew information about Moravian mission from Ryland, and from another minister in the Association, John Sutcliff, and it seems that he read and quoted from the Moravian *Periodical Accounts*.²⁸ Connections made within the Association were seminal. In the same period the London Particular Baptist leader, John Rippon, in his *Baptist Annual Register* for 1790-1793, commended the BMS, reported on the Moravians, included details of baptistic (mainly Mennonite) churches in Prussia, Poland, Lithuania, Saxony, the Rhineland, Switzerland, France and Russia, and expressed his desire for 'universal interchange' among baptised ministers and people.²⁹

The nineteenth century saw further steps taken in English Baptist associating. Nationally, there was the formation of the General Union among Particular Baptists. This had a faltering start, but in 1832 a significant development occurred when the Union was reformulated on a broader basis with the hope of embracing members of the New Connexion of General Baptists, which had been formed in 1770 by the energetic evangelical, Dan Taylor. The reformulated Union invited support from 'Baptist ministers and churches who agree in sentiments usually denominated evangelical'.³⁰ In different parts of the country General and Particular Baptists began to work together.³¹ Finally, at the New Connexion meetings in Burnley in 1891, under the presidency of John Clifford, who was the leading General Baptist of the period, it was agreed that the New Connexion would respond to the invitation of the Baptist Union (which was still a Particular Baptist body) to form a Union in which Particular and General Baptists would associate around a broad evangelical theology.

²⁵ J.C.S. Mason, *The Moravian Church and the Missionary Awakening in England, 1760-1800* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2001), pp. 86-7.

²⁶ The full text of Carey's *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians, to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* is reproduced in T. George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Leicester: IVP, 1991).

²⁷ Mason, *The Moravian Church*, p. 145.

²⁸ J.E. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Moravian Publication Office [1923]), p. 3; cf. D.A. Schattschneider, 'William Carey, Modern Missions and the Moravian Influence', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1998), pp. 8-12.

²⁹ J. Rippon, *The Baptist Annual Register* (1790-1793) (London: Dilly, Button and Thomas, 1793), pp. 371-84, 303-18, preface.

³⁰ E.A. Payne, *The Baptist Union: A Short History* (London: Baptist Union, 1959), p. 61; J.H.Y. Briggs, *The English Baptists of the 19th Century* (Didcot: The Baptist Historical Society, 1994), p. 214.

³¹ See I. Sellers, ed., *Our Heritage: The Baptists of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire 1647-1987* (Leeds: Yorkshire Baptist Association, 1987), pp. 65-6.

Leon McBeth makes the strange assertion in *The Baptist Heritage* that this merger ‘spread General Baptist Christology throughout the denomination’ – by General Baptist Christology he appears to mean a tendency to Unitarianism.³² In fact the theology of the New Connexion as expounded by Dan Taylor involved a determined rejection of Unitarianism.³³ The merger of the two streams of Baptist life was rather, as John Briggs puts it, an exercise in ‘Evangelical Ecumenism’.³⁴ This move clearly expresses an instinct for wider fellowship.

Across continental Europe, the nineteenth century saw the development and advance of Baptist life, with Baptists in many instances growing out of existing renewal groups.³⁵ A highly significant event was the baptism of members of a group in Hamburg, Germany, which included Johann Gerhard Oncken. The baptisms were conducted by the American Baptist, Professor Barnas Sears, in the river Elbe, on 22 April 1834. Because of the evangelistic vision and vigorous leadership of Oncken, German-speaking Baptist churches began to spread throughout many parts of Europe. Fifty-six Baptist representatives met in Hamburg in 1849 and organised the Union of Associated Churches of Baptised Christians in Germany and Denmark. Oncken offered reasons for the creation of the Union which emphasised the place of wider fellowship. He stated: ‘Every apostolic Christian church must be a Mission Society...but the mission work must be furthered by the joining together of more churches’.³⁶ This view was taken up by others. In the Russian Baptist context a Confession of Faith was drawn up in 1913 by Johann Kargel, who had trained in the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg. This confession emphasised that the universal Church of Christ is ‘built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone’ and that ‘although the members of this church are from different nations, different situations and have different gifts, they all are one in Christ and individually members one with another’. It saw local churches as ‘built by the Lord in different countries, cities and local places’ for uniting the children of God and for ‘the spreading of the Kingdom of God on earth’.³⁷

³² H.L. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville, TN.: Broadman Press, 1987) p. 517.

³³ For the New Connexion see F. Rinaldi, *The Tribe of Dan: A Study of the New Connexion of General Baptists, 1770-1891* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2008).

³⁴ J.H.Y. Briggs, ‘Evangelical Ecumenism: The Amalgamation of General and Particular Baptists in 1891’, *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. 34 (1991), No. 3, pp. 99-115, and No. 4, pp. 160-79.

³⁵ See I. M. Randall, ‘“Pious Wishes”: Baptists and wider renewal movements in nineteenth-century Europe’, *Baptist Quarterly* Vol. 38, No. 7 (2000), pp. 316-31.

³⁶ W. L. Wagner, *New Move Forward in Europe* (South Pasadena, CA.: William Carey Library, 1978), p. 13; cf. I.M. Randall, ‘“Every Apostolic Church a Mission Society”: European Baptist Origins and Identity’, in A. R. Cross, ed., *Ecumenism and History: Studies in Honour of John H. Y. Briggs* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), pp. 281-301.

³⁷ G.K. Parker, *Baptists in Europe: History and Confessions of Faith* (Nashville, TN.: Broadman Press, 1982), pp. 155-6.

In the early twentieth century John Howard Shakespeare, the dominant and creative Secretary of the British Baptist Union, embarked on a series of measures designed to address what he saw as the weaknesses of Baptist independency. Shakespeare was influenced by a number of factors. He was concerned about those ministers who were struggling on low incomes and he wished to have a central fund to ensure a reasonable minimum stipend. He also wanted to put in place a system that would allow ministers to move from one ministry to another.³⁸ Such moves usually took place through informal contacts. Shakespeare was also influenced by his consultative work with Hungarian Baptists under the auspices of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). He hoped to enable Hungarian Baptists to 'avoid the faults and weaknesses which Independency exhibits among ourselves'.³⁹ In addition, Shakespeare was an ecumenist who drew from ecclesiological thinking in other denominations.⁴⁰ This was particularly the case in his thinking about regional superintendents. A proposal of Shakespeare that the Baptist Union should have a system of superintendency was accepted by the Union Assembly in 1915, with Shakespeare, in his address, referring to the example of the seventeenth-century General Baptists.⁴¹ It seems more likely, however, that Shakespeare's model was the German Lutheran Church's model of superintendency, and he was also sympathetic to Anglican Episcopal arrangements: no doubt a comment by one English Baptist about the superintendents being 'an ideal Bench of Bishops' pleased him greatly.⁴² Although Shakespeare did not achieve all that he wanted, he was a significant shaper of wider English Baptist life.

Theological thinking about Baptist ecclesiology continued throughout the twentieth century. In 1944, Ernest Payne, later the General Secretary of the British Baptist Union, wrote an important book, *The Fellowship of Believers*, in which he argued for a 'higher' view of the Church than was common among English Baptists at that time. Payne acknowledged the encouragement of, Wheeler Robinson, a leading English Baptist scholar, who in a foreword to *The Fellowship of Believers* suggested that although local church independence was a valuable safeguard of Christian liberty, it could 'become a form of selfishness alien to the Spirit of the Body of Christ, and far from the teaching and example

³⁸ *Baptist Times*, 22 January 1909, p. 60.

³⁹ See P. Shepherd, *The Making of a Modern Denomination* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2001), p. 40.

⁴⁰ In this context it is important to note the contribution of British Baptists to ecumenism: see A.R. Cross, 'Service to the Ecumenical Movement: The Contribution of British Baptists', *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (1999), pp. 107-22.

⁴¹ *Baptist Times*, 30 April 1915, supplement, p. iii. For more see I.M. Randall, *The English Baptists of the 20th Century* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2005), pp. 89-94.

⁴² See I.M. Randall, "'A Good bench of Bishops'?: Early Baptist Superintendency", in Murray, ed., *Translocal Ministry*, pp. 33-43.

of the New Testament.’⁴³ This approach was not one that was appreciated by all Baptists, but it did make a profound impression on the denomination’s future leaders. In 1948 British Baptists issued a statement on the Doctrine of the Church which affirmed that Baptists ‘have always claimed to be part of the one holy catholic Church. They believe in the catholic Church as the holy society of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, which He founded, of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit, so that though manifested in many communions, organized in many modes and scattered throughout the world, it is yet one in Him’. The statement also spoke of the local church as competent, under God, to rule its own life, but added that Baptists were aware of ‘the perils of isolation’ and had sought to express wider fellowship through Associations, the Baptist Union, the BMS and the BWA.⁴⁴

This view of Baptist ecclesial life as ‘more than local’ was influential in the establishment of the European Baptist Federation in 1950.⁴⁵ British Baptist thinking continued to follow this theological trajectory, as can be seen in a series of documents produced over two decades on the doctrine of the ministry, ordination, and the place of associations.⁴⁶ At the same time, there were Baptists who argued for the autonomy of the local church, suggesting that any other model was untrue to the New Testament.⁴⁷ In the 1980s fresh discussion among British Baptists about Baptist identity, especially in relation to the idea of covenanting together, was stimulated by several booklets by Paul Fiddes, Richard Kidd and Brian Haymes.⁴⁸ In 1994 an important document entitled *The Nature of the Assembly and the Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain* affirmed: ‘It follows from a biblical understanding of Church as covenant, fellowship and body that there is...no option about local churches being part of a wider fellowship of churches.’⁴⁹ Paul Fiddes, writing in 2003, could not have been more emphatic: ‘Belonging to a wider association is no more an optional alternative than belonging to Christ.’⁵⁰ Despite the work that has been done in recent years, however, those who wish to argue for wider Baptist

⁴³ E.A. Payne, *The Fellowship of Believers*, 2nd edn. (London: Kingsgate Press, 1952), pp. 3, 6.

⁴⁴ ‘The Baptist Doctrine of the Church’, in R. Hayden, ed., *Baptist Union Documents 1948-1977* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1980), pp. 5, 8.

⁴⁵ For the history see B. Green, *Crossing the Boundaries: A History of the European Baptist Federation* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2003), and Keith G. Jones, *The European Baptist Federation: A Case Study in European Baptist Interdependency 1950-2006* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009).

⁴⁶ See Hayden, ed., *Baptist Union Documents 1948-1977*, chapters 2, 3 and 5.

⁴⁷ See *Liberty in the Lord* (London: Baptist Revival Fellowship, 1964), which sets out the views of the Baptist Revival Fellowship. For background see Randall, *The English Baptists of the 20th Century*, chapters 6-8.

⁴⁸ For an account see P.S. Fiddes, *Doing Theology in a Baptist Way* (Oxford: Whitley Publications, 2000).

⁴⁹ *The Nature of the Assembly and the Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain*. Doctrine and Worship Committee (Didcot: Baptist Union, 1994), p. 8.

⁵⁰ Fiddes, *Tracks and Traces*, p. 200.

relatedness face both theological and practical challenges. Alan Sell commented in 2006 that 'until recently, as far as I have been able to discover, there has been little detailed *theological* writing upon Baptist associations and the Baptist Union in so far as these have significance in a communion which prizes local autonomy.'⁵¹ In addition, at the grassroots level there is often a deeply-felt espousal of local church 'independence', with much less attention being paid to 'counsel and help' within the wider Baptist community. The words of B.R. White in 1987 are worth repeating. *Interdependence*, White asserted, was the mark of the converted – the search for independence was Adam's sin.⁵²

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⁵¹ A.P.F. Sell, *Nonconformist Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006), p. 106.

⁵² White, 'The Practice of Association', p. 29.

School as Workshop of Humanity: J. A. Komenský's Pedagogical Anthropology

Jan Hábl

Introduction

This paper introduces the basic anthropological thoughts of Jan Amos Komenský's pedagogy. Komenský is internationally known as Comenius. He was a Czech seventeenth century Brethren bishop, philosopher and educator who is celebrated especially for his timeless didactic principles, which earned him the epithet 'the teacher of nations'. The goal of this paper is to argue that the brilliance of Comenius' pedagogy (usually well known and admired) is due to its brilliant philosophical foundations (usually ignored or forgotten).

Need for Educational Humanisation

Since the fall of Communism in 1989, Czech pedagogy joined the European pedagogical trends in a search for a humanising (non-totalitarian) approach to education. Given the dehumanising tendencies of the totalitarian regimes (both past and present), there prevails an overall consensus amongst contemporary Czech educationalists that one of the key principles of the school system transformation is that of *humanisation*.¹ The purpose of education is to humanise the human being, that is, to form an authentic versatily developed humanity.

However, in spite of the humanistic rhetoric,² contemporary education recognises its failure to achieve the goal.³ It is true that the school succeeds relatively well in equipping learners with the various

¹ See for example: J. Skalková, *Humanizace vzdělávání a výchovy jako soudobý pedagogický problém* (The Humanisation of Education as a Contemporary Pedagogical Problem), UJEP 1993; E. Walterová, *Humanizace vzdělávání jako prostředek kultivace člověka* (Humanisation of Education as a Means of Cultivation of the Human Being) in: *Pedagogická revue*, 43, 1991, V, pp. 327–333; T. Harbo, *Humanizace vzdělání a současné teorie kurikula* (Humanisation of Education and Contemporary Curricular Theories) in: *Pedagogika*, 41, 1991, III, pp. 247–255.

² Pavel Floss helpfully points out that paragraph 2 of the School Act 561/2004, which was validated in the Czech Republic on 1st January 2005, contains formulations of basic educational principles and goals which are essentially identical with those of J. A. Komenský. For details see P. Floss, *Poselství J.A.Komenského současné Evropě* (The Legacy of J.A.Komenský to Contemporary Europe) (Brno: Soliton, 2005), p. 26.

³ However, the failure is still interpreted as temporary and provisional; its achievement is expected as soon as some new technically better method is generated and implemented – whether political, economic, structural, curricular or other. Cf. A. Prázný, 'Comenius - the thinker of crisis', in S. Chocholová, M. Pánková, M. Steiner, eds., *Johannes Amos Comenius - The Legacy to the Culture of Education* (Praha: Academia, 2009), p. 250-255.

pragmatic skills and competencies necessary for their efficient self-assertion in life or – more currently – in the marketplace, but it fails to form authentic humanity on either a personal or an inter-personal level. Such a school is reduced merely to the *functional* aspect of education, ‘producing efficient employees or experts’, but failing to cultivate the ‘whole humanity of an individual’, observes one of the prominent Czech educational philosophers, Pavel Floss.⁴ The critical question is why. Is the problem a lack of appropriate pedagogical methodology? Is it a lack of financial resources, or a lack of human resources, i.e., teachers’ motivation, skills or abilities? Briefly, is the problem structural, pedagogical, economic, political or other?

Without downplaying the importance of these aspects for effective education, my argument is that the main reason for the failure of the contemporary Czech educational system to achieve the desired ‘humanisation’ is primarily philosophical. The Enlightenment’s self-imposed restriction on metaphysics substantially changed the modern anthropological paradigm. A theo-centric understanding of humanity was replaced by an anthropo-centric one, thus reducing the transcendent or teleological dimension in human beings. I believe herein lies the core of the problem. Humanity which is free of a transcendent relation, which is not subordinated to anything outside itself,⁵ and whose *telos* does not transcend itself, lacks something foundationally human, and consequently forces its own crisis. Both traditional and reformist approaches, representing the contemporary (not only Czech) pedagogical mainstream, rest on this reductive notion of the human being.⁶ Not surprisingly, they fail to produce humanising pedagogical results.

Besides the mainstream, in Czech pedagogical history, there is the heritage of Jan Amos Komenský, internationally known as Comenius. He was a Czech seventeenth century Brethren bishop, philosopher and educator who is celebrated especially for his timeless educational ideas and international irenic efforts, which earned him the epithet ‘the teacher of nations’. His notion of the human being as a fallen *Imago Dei* in need of restoration, functioned as an anthropological foundation for his unique educational project. Education, in his view, plays a soteriological role in turning one’s attention away from his or her self-centred being, and leading

⁴ Floss, *Poselství J.A.Komenského současné Evropě*, p. 26.

⁵ The issue of human sub-ordination to the pre-ordained was often discussed by Radim Palouš, the emeritus rector of Charles University and one of the leading Czech contemporary philosophers of education. See for example his article *J.A.Komenský – náboženský myslitel* (J.A.Komenský – a Religious Thinker), in SCeH, 51, XXIV/1994, pp. 7-12.

⁶ It needs to be recognised that the traditional Herbartism and reformist Progressivism which are the most dominating approaches in the Czech setting are not quite identical with the original ones. What we have in the Czech lands today is rather a mixture of traditional and reformist neo-versions of the original.

him or her back to an authentic vertical relationship to God, which in turn leads to the restoration of broken horizontal human relationships: to one's self and to others.

My argument is that contemporary education's failure to achieve *humanisation* is related to anthropological reductionism, which does not take into account the transcendent dimension of humanity. Komenský's pedagogy, on the contrary, assumes such an anthropology, thus offering the very element contemporary education lacks, and I believe needs, in order to achieve the desired *humanisation*. By revisiting Komenský I do not suggest replacing modern education with that of Komenský, but rather complementing it. Instead of ignoring the transcendent dimension of humanity, my proposal intends to develop a constructive approach to pedagogy which both draws on the experience of modern pedagogical science, and at the same time takes into account the twofold transcendence of human beings, which Komenský expresses in theological terms as one's relationship to God and to others.

School as Workshop of Humanity

Komenský's thought throughout his life showed signs of a certain dynamic. There might be discerned about four or five main phases in his development, each of which was characterised by a specific philosophical accent.⁷ In this brief study, however, I want to focus only on the common anthropological assumption, which unifies the whole of Komenský's thought. The key concept here is one of 'nesamosvojnost', which is a term not easily translatable into English. It expresses the idea of the teleological, ontological and existential embedding of all reality in God. All the beings of this world, including human beings, are 'nesamosvojný', that is, they are not self-existing and self-sustaining, they do not belong to themselves and do not have their ultimate goal within themselves, but are related to God the Creator.

In this very nature of the world lies, according to Komenský, its educative character. In the methodological part of his *Didactics*, Komenský explains: 'Whatever is, is for some purpose, and in order to reach the goal, it is furnished with the necessary instruments, even with some kind of impetus, that makes things flow to their goals not against their nature, but rather spontaneously and gently...'.⁸ In other words, 'the world is not an accidental occurrence of something that follows an anonymous mechanism,

⁷ The number of phases depends on the method of periodisation. The phases are merely relatively delimited; some Comeniologists consider the *encyclopedic*, *critical* and *consolation* phase as one – a *preparatory* or *pre-pansophic* one, whereas others tend to distinguish them.

⁸ Komenský, *Velká didaktika*, (Great Didactics), Praha 1905 p. 51-52.

emerging from dark meaninglessness and similarly heading towards empty indifference; on the contrary, the world is an intentional abundance of all beings, called to be “well”, beings called not merely “to be”, but “to be in order to”,’ interprets Radim Palouš.⁹

Every being in its true form has got the self-transcending designation. And its transcendence is educative. ‘From the world itself we are to learn transcendence, we are to learn that the goal of each thing lies beyond itself; thus the goal of things is in human beings, and the goal of a human being is that which is beyond him/her.’¹⁰ Men and women enter the school of the world through birth and are immediately exposed to its education. The world narrates a narrative of its own transcendence and thus calls people to the same task, to fulfil their role in the drama, for, after all, they are part of the same story. The failure to follow this calling (education) is the essence of human fallenness as expressed in the biblical narrative, and has caused all the human problems, miseries and wretchedness experienced in the world.

As for Komenský’s anthropology, he views human beings as complex beings of a *noble* and *fallen* nature. Human beings are very noble, because they were created to be the image of God. On the other hand, Komenský recognised the fallen side of human nature, which causes humans to miss the noble ‘*telos*’ of their lives, and thus brings about all the darkness and evils observable within the human world. Jan Patočka interprets this disposition of human nature as the ‘twofold potential of humanity’. That is, a human being is substantially an open being endowed with two potentials: he or she might be moved towards true humanity, which is characterised by love, openness and the commitment of one’s self to the whole, to its unity, harmony and meaning. But a human being might also give way to the ‘*samosvojný*’ tendency of human nature, that is, the tendency to a self-focused entangling into one’s self which is indifferent to others; even hostile to everything that disturbs this self-concentrated closeness.¹¹

From this arises the relationship between J. A. Komenský’s philosophical assumptions and his educational philosophy: the goal, content and method of his educational project arise from and respond to this specific condition of human affairs. Komenský’s educational project is *educatio* in the authentic meaning of the word, that is, e-ducation, a *leading-out*; it is to lead humans out of everything counter-human (sins,

⁹ R. Palouš, *Komenského Boží Svět* (Komenský’s God’s World), (Praha: SPN, 1992), p. 18.

¹⁰ J. Patočka, *Cusanus a Komenský* (Cusanus and Komenský) in *Komeniologické studie I* (Comeniological Studies, vol. I), (Praha: Oikoymenh, 1997), p. 182.

¹¹ J. Patočka, *Lidskost Komenského* (Komenský’s Humanity) in *Komeniologické studie III* (Comeniological Studies, vol.III), (Praha: Oikoymenh, 2003) pp. 485-489.

darkness, delusions, violence, etc.) towards true humanity, that is, to light, truth, unity and harmony, dwelling ultimately in God.¹² However corrupted human nature is, the potential of true humanity is still there, and the restoration of humanity is both desirable and possible due to the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. This restoration of the so-called *nexus hypostaticus*,¹³ the vertical and personal relationship to God, includes also the restoration of the horizontal relationship to other people. Such transformation of the human being into the image of God is what constitutes, according to Komenský, the ultimate humanity. School which transforms human beings in such a way is, according to Komenský, the proper ‘workshop of humanity’.¹⁴

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¹² Cf. R. Palouš, *Čas výchovy* (Time of Education) (Praha: SPN, 1999), p. 63; J. Patočka, *Komenského duchovní biografie* (Komenský's Spiritual Biography) in *Komeniologické studie III* (Comeniological Studies, vol.III) (Praha: Oikoymenth, 200), p. 379.

¹³ J.A. Komenský, *Didactica magna* (Great Didactics) in *DJAK*, vol.XV (Praha: Academia, 1986), p. 53.

¹⁴ See J.A. Komenský, *Velká didaktika* (Great Didactics) (Praha, 1905), p. 98.

Book Reviews

Rekindling Community: Connecting People, Environment and Spirituality

Alastair McIntosh

Green Books for The Schumacher Society, Totnes, Devon, 2008,
110 pages, ISBN 978 1 90032 238 6

This book was commissioned by the Schumacher Society (small is beautiful) as one of their *Briefings*. Alastair McIntosh, a radical Quaker of the seventeenth century Ranter tendency, is well known as someone working on the interface between environmental and theological issues. He is an interesting theologian and environmentalist, raised on the Isle of Lewis and renowned as a campaigner on issues of land, especially with the Island of Eigg.

Whilst in Papua New Guinea, McIntosh explored ideas of community as a young man engaged with Voluntary Service Overseas (a United Kingdom NGO). Building from these early experiences he explores what being human can mean, drawing on insights from rural life. McIntosh has worked in the Greater Glasgow area and, though many of his insights are infused with ideas from rural communities which survive by supporting each other, his ideas are tested in the reality of urban conurbations where more and more of the world's population live in order to survive economically.

McIntosh is concerned to develop notions of economics 'as if people mattered' and to explore how fundamental human needs can be responded to in areas of urban deprivation. The buoyancy of the human person needs grace, which, like a river, can flow from true human community which is essentially triune in nature – relating to the natural world, with one another, and in the divine. As McIntosh says in his conclusion, 'to have life abundant we must become *great lovers* in every sense of that expression'.

This is a poetic and passionate book. All wishing to strengthen ideas of community, whether in the church or in society, will find insights to encourage and stimulate. The book is peppered with testimonies from others who have taken the insights within the book seriously, which makes it highly usable for those seeking community everywhere.

Keith G. Jones
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In Praise of Worship: An Exploration of Text and Practice

Edited by David J. Cohen and Michael Parsons

Pickwick Publications, Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon, USA, 2010,
297 pages, ISBN 978 1 60899 145 7

This book is an important contribution by an Anglo-Australian group of scholars to pressing issues on the theme of Christian worship. The writers engage with the text and practice of worship in Biblical times, theological reflection on worship and the practical implications for contemporary evangelical worship. As such, the book reaches out from scholarly interaction with the Biblical sources to community experience today and will be a valuable tool for students and for all interested in the development of authentic contemporary Christian worship.

Many might reasonably ask ‘why another book on worship’ when the catalogues of publishers are full of such books? However, in the opinion of this reviewer, *In Praise of Worship* bridges a ‘gap’. Most recent worship books fall into two categories: either books on contemporary worship styles, which explore different approaches from the emergent church, through the seekers church and comment on liturgical worship, blended worship, spectator worship, traditional and revivalist worship - a veritable ‘worship maze’ as Paul Basden has argued; or, books by technical liturgists on the history of worship, analysis of ancient texts and theological reflection on worship. These two approaches often appear to be written as if the other approach does not exist.

In Praise of Worship seeks to move from Old Testament text and practice, through New Testament developments and into serious reflection on contemporary worship, its essential Trinitarian nature, the rhythm of worship, the quest for justice in and through worship and the place of the preacher as a worshipper. The authors are recognised scholars within the evangelical tradition coming from Australia and the United Kingdom, so it certainly addresses the Anglo-Saxon worship milieu, but several of the contributors have had international experience so the contributions are not so narrowly focused as to render the book inappropriate or inaccessible for those outside of the Anglo-Australian context. This book deserves to be on the required reading list of those being formed as worship leaders.

Keith G. Jones

Ministry, Sacrament and Representation: Ministry and Ordination in Contemporary Baptist Theology and the Rise of Sacramentalism

Paul W. Goodliff

Regent's Park College, Oxford, 2010, 239 pages,
ISBN 978 0 95397 468 9

Paul Goodliff is Head of the Department of Ministry of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and this book is his doctoral work slightly expanded in the final section. As such, it is scholarly and reflects an in-depth knowledge of Baptist ministry in England and Wales. Paul was formed for ministry by Spurgeon's College, London, then served as a local minister in two pastorates, before becoming a regional minister in the Central Association, prior to his current appointment. Thus, Paul knows ministry in the United Kingdom context 'from the inside'.

Inevitably readers from other European, North American, African and Asian contexts will find much that does not reflect their own experience, but this very careful study raises issues from which we can all derive great benefit.

Through the last century Baptists in the United Kingdom have been divided into those people who have taken a 'functional' view of ministry – 'this person appears to have certain skills and gifts and is quite useful in this place at this moment', over against a more sacramental view of ministry where the local and wider church has discerned gifts in an individual. In this model God's gift of grace and charism can be taken, formed, shaped and put at the service of the Church not just for a moment, but rather, the setting aside of that person, entrusting them to a way of being which transcends a particular locale or a particular *chronos*. Such an approach believes there is something of a *kairos* element driven by the activity of our Triune God in the working of the Holy Spirit.

The book is full of empirical data from surveys conducted across a range of British Baptist ministers in the early twenty-first century. However, it is not a book of statistics and percentages. It is an exploration of ministry as a way of being, rather than a functionalist activity based on skills acquired in the way one might learn how to answer telephone calls in a bank call centre. The book rewards careful study, with the final comments commending developing missional orders, such as the Northumbria Community, to which this reviewer assents.

Keith G. Jones

In the winter of 2010 and spring of 2011, IBTS is offering these lectures for continuing professional development or theological refreshment:

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*Though some of the participants will be doing these weeks as part of their degree at IBTS, the courses are open to anyone who would like to attend.
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